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ABSTRACT

The derivation of the concept of participative management from a variety of complementary managerial and motivational theories, and its acceptance and use as a managerial technique in library administration are reviewed in detail. The major contributions to the development of the concept of participative management, including Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, Herzberg's categories of job satisfaction, McGregor's theories concerning managerial style and its relation to organizational structure, and Lickert's synthesis of the positions of Maslow, Herzberg, and McGregor are discussed and related to one another. The history of participative management in libraries is examined, and the various analyses of the effectiveness of the technique that have appeared in the library literature are summarized. Questions relating to the usefulness and success of participative management in library administration are then addressed briefly. A table provides a linear relational profile of the managerial and motivational theories discussed and a 27-item bibliography is included. (J1)

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LIMITED PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT
AS A PROBLEM-SOLVING ALTERNATIVE
FOR LIBRARY MANAGERS:
A DECADE IN REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

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The concept of participative management was synthesized from a variety of complimentary managerial and motivational theories. The major contributions to the concept are discussed and related to one another both in the text and in a linear model. The literature of participative management in libraries is reviewed. Originally proposed as a potentially useful managerial technique by Marchant (Library Trends, 1971), the concept initially appealed to many in the profession. Kaplan rejected the technique (College and Research Libraries, 1973, 1975) although he later embraced it under the euphemism of "power-sharing." The literature of the remainder of the seventies is reviewed, indicating that limited-purpose participative management has gained acceptance by the profession at large .

INTRODUCTION

In common with the rest of humanity, administrators are continually in search of techniques that will help them cope with and to effectively perform their jobs. Classically, the administrative role has two major aspects: identifying work to be performed and motivating others to do it. During the past thirty-five years, the performance of both roles by a single person has often proved to be beyond the capability of the individual manager. The industrial and educational growth which has occurred in the United States since World War II has produced technologies and organizations which greatly complicate, if not defy, our ability to dichotomize organizational activity into managerial or labor categories.

Not unexpectedly, numerous techniques to aid managers in the planning and control of their organizations have been developed, introduced, and adopted to varying degrees. Management by Objectives (MBO), Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), Critical Path Management (CPM), Programming Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS), zero-based budgeting, and systems analysis are examples of major additions to the managerial repertoire which have grown in response to the increasing complexity of organizational activity. They primarily address areas of technological and financial complexity, enabling individuals to represent, grasp, and deal with complex interrelated networks of variables which would otherwise become too elusive to manage with any degree of confidence. However, each of them is more or less technically oriented, addressing the management and motivation of human resources only incidentally.

While organizations and their activities became more complex, human resources, regrettably, became no easier to manage. Perhaps as a result of rising educational levels, or as an extension of democratic ideals, people became less content to be "managed" like any other material resource. The development of "human relations" management attributed to Elton Mayo and his associates began in the 1930's, replacing the earlier "scientific management" of Taylor and reflecting a general change in ambient social values. After 1945, the patronization of the employee stressed by human relations management was no longer sufficient. Employees began to demand a voice in the management of the organization itself (1, p. 164) (2, p. 190). The demands gained strength in the 1960's, a corollary of generalized social protest against hierarchical organization (3, p. 259). In response to these demands, a technique of permitting varying degrees of shared organizational governance was developed. This technique is often referred to as participative management.

In the pages that follow, we will consider the work of several important motivational and organizational scholars who predated and contributed to the development of the participative management concept. We will present and discuss a model relating the positions of these people at various levels along a linear scale and will attempt an operational definition of the term. We will then review the literature of participative management in libraries and will offer some observations and conclusions.

A PASTICHE OF IDEAS

When first definitively articulated, generally by Lickert in 1967(4) and specifically for libraries by Marchant in 1976(5), participation management was hardly a new or radical concept. It may be seen as developing as a recension of the ideas of several writers who dealt with some aspects of organizational and motivational theory in their work.

In 1954, Abraham Maslow produced his classic work, Motivation and Personality (6). In it, he postulated a hierarchy of levels upon which humans can be and are motivated. The hierarchy is comprised of five levels. From lowest to highest, the levels are those of biological needs, safety needs, acceptance by the group, self-esteem, and self-actualization. The needs are additive from lowest to highest. That is, biological needs, for food, health, and so on, are the human organism's first concern. If these needs are not satisfied, higher level needs like self-esteem or self-actualization cannot be realized. It was recognized that individual human beings move dynamically and, sometimes, overlappingly through the hierarchy. Maslow's hierarchy of motivation levels has remained as a valued view through the present and, while not "participative management," is necessary conceptual groundwork for its later development.

A second writer on motivation, Frederick Herzberg, (7), addressed the topic from the point of view of business organizations. Herzberg divided factors that impact upon an employee's level of job satisfaction into two categories: hygiene factors and motivators. The former included such factors as company policy and administration, supervision style and relationship with supervisor, work conditions, salary, relationships with peers and subordinates, personal life,

status and security. Motivators included achievement, recognition, satisfaction inherent in the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth (7, p. 57). Hygiene factors by their presence or absence could not produce job satisfaction, but their absence was responsible for precluding job satisfaction. Lack of motivators did not produce job dissatisfaction, but precluded satisfaction from being realized. Both hygiene factors and motivators must be present for job satisfaction to result. Like Maslow's hierarchy, hygiene factors and motivators are additive as we move up the scale.

Moving to organizational writers, McGregor in his classic work (8) polarized organizational models along the lines of two sets of assumptions about people. Theory X, the underpinning of the hierarchical organization, assumed that people were inherently lazy, incapable, and motivated solely by the desire for economic gain. Motivation in Theory X is simple: offer more money or threaten punishment for non-compliance. Theory X represents, then, an older organizational type and view of human motivation. Management in a Theory X organization is through direction and control.

The alternative proposed by McGregor is Theory Y. Theory Y makes a different set of assumptions about people's motivation and is characterized by a different organizational type and managerial style. In the Theory Y view, it is as natural for people to expend energy in work as in other activities. The capacity for contribution and intelligent self-direction is assumed to be widely distributed through the population, and a variety of factors similar to Maslow's higher order motivation levels and Herzberg's motivators are recognized.

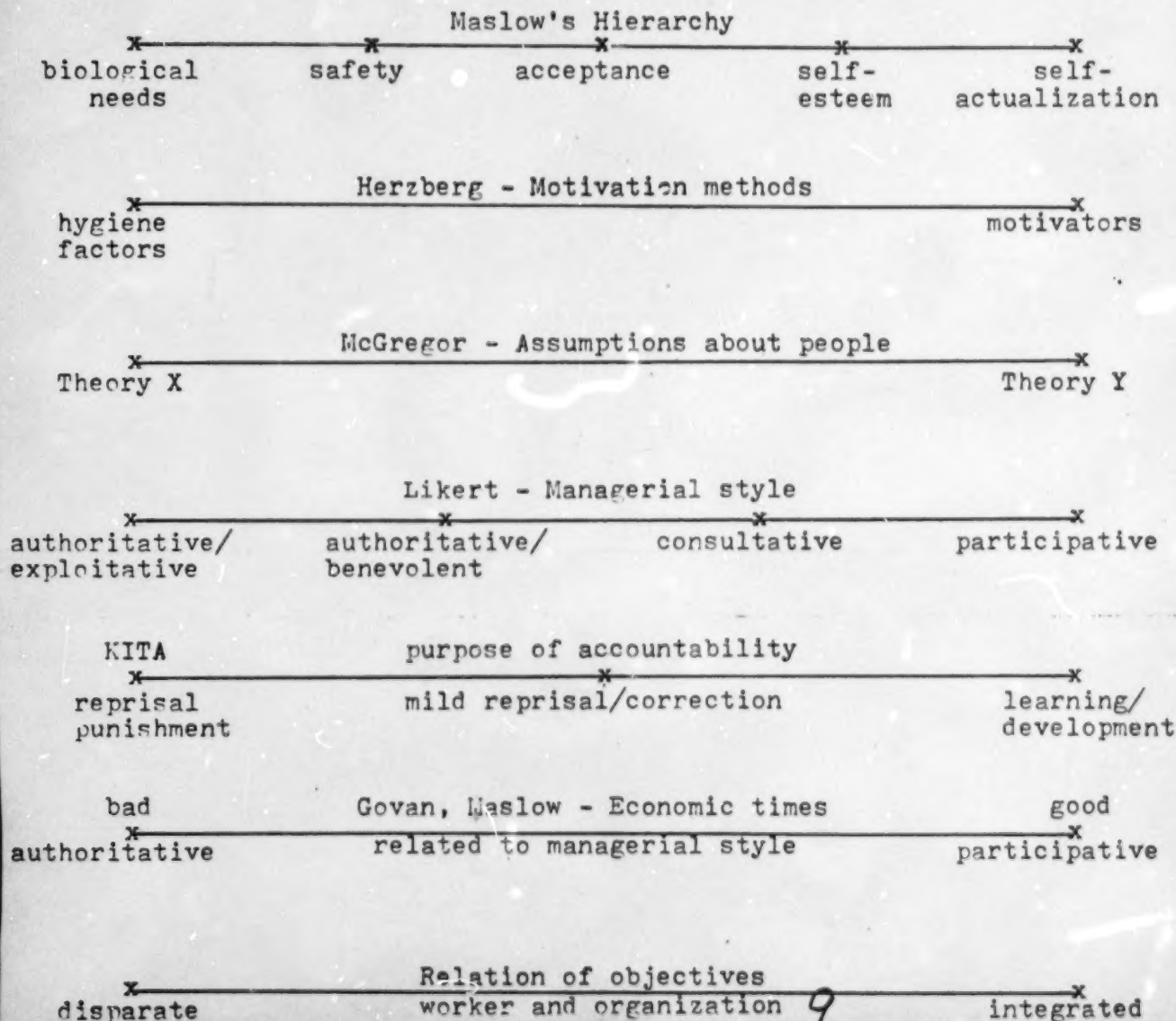
Organizations are decentralized in the Theory Y model. People are most thoroughly motivated when their personal objectives and those of the organization are integrated, when they are accomplished simultaneously. Theory Y represents an emergent view of human motivation closely related to that of Maslow and Herzberg.

Finally, Likert (4) proposed a spectrum of managerial styles which reflect varying degrees of mix between the extremes of the positions of Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor. The managerial styles range from authoritative/exploitative through authoritative/benevolent and consultative, to participative. While many workers contributed in laying the groundwork, Likert may be credited with synthesizing and articulating the concept of participative management.

Table 1 represents the relationship which exists between the writers discussed. It is a linear relational model of ambient managerial and motivational theories which have contributed to the participative management concept. The views of the writers discussed are represented by the horizontal lines which bear their names.

TABLE 1

Linear Relational Model of
Ambient Managerial and Motivational Theories
Profile of Complimentary Positions



By reading horizontally, the spectrum of each view is represented. The horizontal lines bear an approximate positional relationship to one another when read vertically. For example, Maslow's biological needs correspond to Herzburg's lower level hygiene factors of salary and security. These in turn reinforce Theory X in its assumption that humans work only for monetary reward, are lazy and must be driven to work. All of these correspond nicely with the authoritative/exploitative managerial style described by Likert in which people are closely supervised and worked as hard as possible to provide the maximum output for the employer.

At the other extreme, at Maslow's highest level of motivation, self-actualization, the milieu of the employee will contain a high incidence of Herzberg's motivators such as growth, achievement and recognition. The assumptions of Theory Y will fit the worker at this end of the scale. He will seek responsibility, exercise ability in the service of organizational objectives willingly, and will see a good deal of congruence between personal and organizational objectives. This person is likely to be effective and comfortable in a participative situation.

Three further observations should be noted. First, the purpose of accountability varies along a linear scale, in approximation to the writers discussed. That is, in an authoritative/exploitative organization, accountability is used to locate a target for reprisal, punishment, or a KITA, to use Herzberg's apt term, if something goes wrong. Here the emphasis is on affixing blame. At the other end of the scale, the purpose of accountability is still to locate sources

of difficulty, but here the purpose is to affect non-threatening corrective action and personal development. Second, there is some feeling, by Maslow, Govan (3, p. 264), and the present writer, that the whole complex of motivating factors, managerial style, and purpose of accountability is circumscribed by general economic conditions. In bad times when jobs are scarce, managerial styles become exploitative and authoritarian, people fear reprisal and loss of position at the basic hygiene factor, biological level and respond with resentment and hostility toward employers. In good times, however, the situation is reversed. Employees are courted and encouraged, are more likely to be permitted a voice in the enterprise and, since hygiene factors and biological needs are amply fulfilled, motivation and movement toward self-actualization is more likely. The worker is likely to take on Theory Y characteristics. Finally, the objectives of the worker and of the organization are likely to be disparate in bad times when employee relations can be said to be conducted at the level of the least common denominator, loss of job as punishment for non-compliance or failure. They are more likely to be integrated in good times, when the employee is needed more than he needs a specific organization. In summary, what has been described is the function of supply and demand in the labor market.

It is felt, then, that Table 1 represents sets of relationships that coexist along a linear scale. It is thought to be descriptive of a spectrum of managerial milieus and to predict motivational and managerial positions which are consistent with one another, particularly at the extremes. For example, a situation in which the worker is operating at the safety level, that is, of job continuance, is more likely to feel a disparity between the organization's objectives

and his own than is a self-actualized employee. On the other hand, it would be inappropriate to subject a Theory Y employee to an authoritative/exploitative managerial style. The employee would likely revert to Theory X behavior and attitudes quickly.

Participative management, then, grew out of a pastiche of ideas about motivation and managerial styles that were ambient in the literature beginning in the 1950's. These ideas were complimentary and, taken together, present a more complex yet more realistic view of human interaction than those previously held. As an operating concept, participative management describes a system of governance in which the employee has some actual say in the management of the organization. Employees in such an organization are likely to be self-actualized, highly motivated Theory Y people. They readily accept responsibility, are interested in participating in the organization's governance, and perceive a high degree of congruence between organizational and personal objectives.

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARIES

An early major proponent of the adoption of participative management in libraries was Marchant. In a 1971 article in Library Trends (9), he outlined the basic advantages of participative management for libraries as follows. He begins by pointing out that up until that time, library administration texts stressed the bureaucratic/authoritarian model. However, rank and file librarians were beginning to demand a voice in the governance of the library. He cited research results that indicate that participative management encourages consensus. The staffs in libraries which practice participative management were more satisfied with professional growth oppor-

tunities. As a prominent feature of participative management is to force decisions down to the lowest levels at which they can be made, librarians gain valuable decision-making experience needed for future professional advancement. As decisions are made in groups, the negative effects of inexperience and incompetence are eliminated. The development of the novice is less painful. Group decisions are thus likely to be superior. Those who are involved in them are likely to be committed to their success. Because a threatening environment stifles accurate upward communication of unpleasant news, punishment for error is rejected. The object of accountability is correction and personal growth. Participative management is designed to obviate the need for a multileveled bureaucracy. As librarians with high professional performance indexes were found to feel stifled by hierarchical bureaucracy, participative management could provide a real mechanism for the advancement of professionalism.

In support of Marchant, Axford (10) cited Drucker and pointed out that morale and productivity of knowledge workers is highest when the amount of direct supervision is least. He suggested that middle-level bureaucracies be reduced in the hope of creating an environment in which status is gained as a measure of the individual's contribution to the educational mission of the library rather than upon the authority of a particular office. Another proponent, Morton (11) points out that nothing in the literature suggests that participative management is permissive or lax, although it was commonly misapprehended as such. Indeed, employees under Theory Y have more, rather than less, to do. He recognized that Theory Y should be modified to fit the

tasks and people involved rather than blindly assumed. He felt that participative management is related to Theory Y in that its use helps to establish an environment in which ego needs of employees can be fulfilled. Specifically, he suggested that five Theory Y motivators are to provide employees with definite and unique responsibilities: a short administrative chain of command, an adequate means to demonstrate their achievement and productivity to others, freedom from fear of failure, and opportunities to merge self-actualization with normal job responsibilities. He recognized that integration must be possible for self-actualization to occur. Rudy (12) adds that genuine participation requires that the staff have actual, substantive decision-making powers over matters that affect the whole organization. She points out that, as traditional groups tend to summarily reject ideas from unpopular people and to disregard unpopular ideas without regard for their merit, participative management might help to offset these tendencies. Rudy supports participative management because she sees it as a vehicle for providing access to power for women and minorities.

Primary opposition to participative management in libraries has come from Louis Kaplan. In a 1973 article (13), he began by questioning the assumption that participative management would enhance librarianship. He noted then current developments in libraries that he perceived as in conflict; the drive by librarians for faculty status on the one hand and the adoption of participative management on the other. He assumed that as academic departments are hierarchical in their external relationships, libraries must be hierarchical as well. While

this is correct as regards external library relations it does not necessarily follow as an internal model. In another article in 1975 (14) Kaplan raises some important points. After pointing out that participation is often misunderstood, he poses a crucial question - who participates when. He simplifies Likert's position (4) by stating that Likert recognized two styles of management: authoritative and participative. He stated that Likert ignored individual differences which will influence whether an individual actually will participate. He eschews the term "participative management", adopting instead the term "power sharing". Power-sharing provides management with alternatives to authoritarian and participative styles, along a continuum. Kaplan goes on to express the opinion that the more important a decision is to the organization, the more likely it is that a manager will act unilaterally. A valuable perception was that it makes more sense to talk about authoritative and participative situations than about authoritarian and participative managers. He expresses the same view as that of Marchant (9,p.58) that a fundamental conflict exists between the bureaucratic and the professional orientation (14, p. 476). He pointed out four weaknesses of group decision-making: alienation of those whose opinions are rejected, rising expectations by staff for influence in governance, the frustrating nature of the process itself, and the possibility that group cohesiveness could be negative. He concludes by warning that participative management may undermine discretionary powers, blunting human judgment.

Marchant (15), in a letter written in response to this last article by Kaplan, pointed out that Likert actually included four

managerial styles in his thinking, interposing authoritarian/benevolent and consultative between authoritarian/exploitative and participative, providing the sort of continuum Kaplan suggests (14, p.474). Kaplan replied (16) with a personal attack on Marchant, suggesting that Marchant contact a student of Likert for enlightenment, a superfluous suggestion as Marchant studied under Likert personally.

Kaplan, however, later modified his position. In a 1977 article (17) he addressed some issues of power-sharing. He noted some factors affecting the degree of decision-sharing likely to be present in an organization. If a decision is quite important to the organization, the manager is likely to make a unilateral decision. If a decision is important to a subordinate, a superior is less likely to use an autocratic style. If a decision is important to the senior person, a unilateral decision is likely. Finally, the greater the senior person's span of control, the more likely he or she will be to use a time-saving style, either autocratic or delegative. He goes on to point out three personal factors that are likely to shape decisions. These are the perceived skill of the subordinate and the age and experience of the superior. If the subordinate is perceived as weak, the superior is likely to use an authoritative style. The older and more experienced the manager, the more likely he or she will be to employ a power-sharing style. Power-sharing also increases when the number of functional specialists in an organization increase. Kaplan correctly and courageously notes that "...the American democratic creed...effectively shut(s) off public expression of undemocratic opinion." (17, p. 28). He concludes by stating that there is no

necessary clash between decision sharing and hierarchical structure (17, p. 30), quite a shift from his 1973 position (13).

With even a strong opponent like Kaplan somewhat moved, other library literature suggests that some modified form of participative management has been adopted widely. A 1974 article (18) reports that a form of participative management has been employed in the Tucson, Arizona Public Library in which the administration stipulates projects and "task forces" of employees to resolve specific issues. Here, management decides what gets worked on and the employees provide the solution. In another article from 1974 (19) it was reported that the members of the Washington Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table introduced a "Staff Participation Statement" which split members along the lines of administration and staff, with the former opposed, while the latter were in favor. Another 1974 article (20) reports the existence of a non-supervisory librarians' assembly which generally governs the Duke University libraries. The library administration retained authority in matters of appointment and promotion. In a final 1974 article (21) a failure in "participative management" was reported. At Arizona University, a committee was formed to take up the duties of an Assistant University Librarian for Administration. A committee of department heads was assigned by an administrator. The experiment was abandoned as a failure. One wonders if the objective was not simply to save the salary of a high-level administrator while requiring more work from existing employees.

In a 1975 article (22) the bureaucratic model was denounced as anathema to professionalism. A structure employing internal participative management and bureaucratic external interaction was suggested.

A report from King County, Washington (23) reported that employees wanted to participate in decisions which affected their own jobs but had little interest in areas outside their own. This report corresponds with McGregor's injunction to involve employees only in decisions which matter to them (8).

As in Tucson, the employees at the Rochester, New York Public Library work in a modified participative management environment in which management decides what gets worked on and assigns employee task groups to prepare solutions (24). Finally, in 1976, Richard Dougherty expressed the view that participative management should be used in a limited context, as a tool, where appropriate (25).

Hipps, in 1978 (26) sheds some additional light on the subject. He points out that as participative management is time consuming, that it sometimes produces stalemate, that no one person can usually be held accountable, and that the personality of an administrator may not be congenial to it, it must be used only in appropriate situations. He points out that a purely Theory X or Theory Y manager is something of a myth, and suggests an appropriate balance between them. He reminds us that management is still accountable for the organization.

Finally, Dickinson (27) summarized the state of the discussion in 1978. He noted that in most institutions, administrators decide what gets worked on while employees do the work and make recommendations. He points out that the term "participative management" has meant many things, from situations in which library administrators seek information and advice from staff members to governance of the library by plebiscite. The exercise of administrative authority in a Theory Y

organization is more remote and subtle. He sees no basic conflict in superimposing power-sharing on a hierarchical organization. On the negative side, committees make accountability difficult. Often, the solution of a committee is pleasing to no one. Dickinson supports central decision making, presumably on policy matters. He feels that librarians should be confined to truly professional jobs, greatly reducing numbers of librarians. The organizational hierarchy should have as few levels as possible. A viable hierarchical organization regularly delegates and consults. He concludes by warning against "participative" programs with no real teeth, in which employees merely receive the impression that they are participating. Such programs are quickly seen through by employees and result in bitterness and hostility.

CONCLUSIONS

The concept of participative management was synthesized from a variety of theories of motivation, administration, and political ideologies. The term has been employed to mean anything from limited managerial/labor consultation to organizational egalitarianism. The lack of a specific definition has produced misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the concept. Managerial styles coexist with other relationships along a linear scale. In addition to theories of motivation and managerial style, they are manifestations of assumptions about people, the purpose of accountability, the general economic atmosphere, and the degree to which the objectives of the worker and the organization are integrated. Managerial style may

have some predictive value, as a dependent variable, of the other factors. Further research is needed to investigate this possibility.

After an initial period of introduction, debate, and experimentation, participative management in a limited form has gained general acceptance in librarianship as a useful administrative technique. Where it is employed, the administration usually targets specific issues or problems to be resolved and designates an employee group to develop and implement a solution.

As the bureaucratic organization was seen by many as an impediment to professionalism, an organizational structure wherein participative management is employed internally while the library as a unit maintains its hierarchical external relationships was seen by a number of people as superior to either the hierarchical or collegial model. What is suggested then, is an internal collegial structure with an external hierarchical structure.

To the extent, then that a greater degree of personal and professional growth on the part of staff members has accompanied adequate to superior group decisions for organizational governance, participative management appears to be a positive and useful technique of library administration.

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